

ROBBEN FORD



BLUES

FOR GUITAR

music, tablature
and analysis



The first 48 bars (Hotlines 1-19) though broken up into lines of 2, 3 and 4 bars, are actually a series of four 12 bar Blues progressions and can be played that way. The idea is to give you some sense of flow, and also help learn the form of 12 bar Blues.

HOTLINE # 1

The opening line here is a classic blues line. Observe the jump from the first Bb eighth note on the E string to the second one on the B string. Subtle changes like this are very important in Blues playing.

Hotline #1 musical notation showing a 12-bar blues progression. The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar TAB staff. The progression is divided into three sections: (1) bars 1-4, (2) bars 5-8, and (3) bars 9-12. Chords Bb7 and Eb7 are indicated above the staff. The TAB staff shows fingerings and string numbers (T, A, B) for each note.

HOTLINE # 2

The first 2 eighth notes here are played first by pulling the G string from an Eb note to an F note, then hitting the 2nd eighth on the B string, similar to Hotline #1. The 2 notes in the 2nd bar are the 5th and 3rd of the IV chord (Eb7) of the Blues progression, spelling, or sounding out the key change.

Hotline #2 musical notation showing a 12-bar blues progression. The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar TAB staff. The progression is divided into two sections: (4) bars 1-4 and (5) bars 5-8. Chords Bb7 and Eb7 are indicated above the staff. The TAB staff shows fingerings and string numbers (T, A, B) for each note.

HOTLINE # 3

The first note here (high F) should sound drawn out, like you are really pulling on it. This is a subtle phrasing technique which I hope you can hear on the tape. The point is to exaggerate the bend a little.

Hotline #3 musical notation. The staff shows a sequence of notes with bends (B, RB, PO) and fret numbers (13, 9, 11). The guitar tablature (TAB) is provided below the staff, with fret numbers (6) and (7) indicated. Chords Eb7 and Bb7 are marked above the staff.

HOTLINE # 4

In this line again the Bb eighth notes in the 1st bar are played first on the E string and then on the B string, creating a certain tension. The phrase in the 2nd bar plays right off the V chord (F7) spelling out the chord for the listener.

Hotline #4 musical notation. The staff shows a sequence of notes with bends (PO) and fret numbers (6, 5, 11, 9, 10, 8, 10). The guitar tablature (TAB) is provided below the staff, with fret numbers (8) and (9) indicated. Chords Bb7 and F7 are marked above the staff.

HOTLINE # 5

This is the first line that introduces something predominant in my playing, which is the deliberate use of the minor 3rd (Db) and major 6th (G) juxtaposed against each other. Ordinarily the dominant 7th (G#) would probably be used. This sound creates a certain texture I've always liked.

Hotline #5 musical notation. The staff shows a sequence of notes with bends (PO) and fret numbers (5, 9, 8, 6, 8, 5, 8, 6, 8, 10). The guitar tablature (TAB) is provided below the staff, with fret numbers (10) and (11) indicated. Chords Eb7 and Bb7 are marked above the staff.

HOTLINE # 5 (cont.)

F7

HOTLINE # 6

This is something Texas blues guitarist Albert Collins might play, and it should be played with real punch. Experiment and try playing it with just your fingers.

Bb7 Eb7

The image shows a musical score for a guitar. The top staff is a standard musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The bottom staff is a guitar tablature staff with six lines. The notation includes various chords, scales, and fingerings. The Bb7 chord is shown in the first measure, and the Eb7 chord is shown in the second measure. The tablature includes fret numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9) and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4).

Bb7

3 1 3 1 3 3 1 3 1 3 1 4 3 1 1 3 1

T
A
B

(3) (4)

HOTLINE # 7

Put a lot of 'grease' on the slide from the Ab note to the Bb. The quarter note triplet should sound exaggerated and drawn out here.

Eb7

3 3 3

3 3 1 3 1

9 11 11 11

11 12 11 9 11 9

(5) (6)

HOTLINE # 8

The slide from the Fb (E) grace note to the Eb should be played real punchy. The slide up to the second Bb eighth note in bar two occurs here again.

Bb7

3 3 1

1 1 3 1 3 1

7 9 8 6

7 6 5 11 11 9 11 8

(7) (8)

HOTLINE # 9

This line incorporates the use of "Theme Development" taking the phrase in bar one and developing it both rhythmically and tonally in bar two, stretching it out a bit.

F7

Eb7

2 4 3 1 3

2 4 3 1 3 1 3

9 10 10 8 10

7 8 8 6 8 6 8

(9) (10)

5

HOTLINE #10

The first 2 triplets in bar one are interesting. The same leap occurs from the first Bb eighth note on the E string to the second Bb eighth on the B string, and the eighth note rest between them creates a gap, almost like a deliberate stumble. Once again a certain tension is created. The quick 16th notes in bar 2 create a little break from the basic triplet feel that's been pretty constant so far.

Hotline #10 musical notation and guitar tablature. The notation shows a Bb7 chord in the first measure and an F7 chord in the second measure. The tablature includes fingerings (1, 2, 3) and bar numbers (1) and (2).

HOTLINE #11

This line uses Theme Development again, taking the phrase in the first bar and stretching it out (quite a bit this time) in bars three and four.

Hotline #11 musical notation and guitar tablature. The notation shows a Bb7 chord in the first measure and an Eb7 chord in the second measure. The tablature includes fingerings (1, 3) and bar numbers (1) and (2).

Hotline #11 musical notation and guitar tablature. The notation shows a Bb7 chord in the first measure and an Eb7 chord in the second measure. The tablature includes fingerings (1, 3) and bar numbers (3) and (4).

HOTLINE #12

Note the Hammer-On in bar one. The double stop (using 2 notes at once) in bar 2 puts the minor 3rd and major 6th flat against each other creating that sound and tension I mentioned earlier in the book.

Eb7

(5) (6)

HOTLINE #13

The valuable part of this line is the position it's played in on the guitar neck. It is like playing in the relative minor key (Gm7 in this case), which is a good position for playing major Pentatonic lines in the tonic key (Bb in this case).

Bb7

(7) (8)

HOTLINE #14

This is a four bar line, and a lot of the notes sort of jump around. The phrasing has the quality of stopping and starting, sort of a stumbling effect.

F7 **Eb7**

(9) (10)

7

HOTLINE #14 (cont.)

Musical notation for Hotline #14 (cont.). The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb7 and F7). The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb7 and F7). The notation includes fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 1, 4, 1, 1) and a triplet (11) in the bottom staff.

HOTLINE #15

Double stops are used in this line a lot. The first bar I find to be very funky. It should be played with the fingers rather than the pick. I use my first and second fingers on the B and E strings and my thumb on the G string.

Musical notation for Hotline #15. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb7 and Eb7). The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb7 and Eb7). The notation includes fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 3, 1, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4) and a triplet (11) in the bottom staff.

HOTLINE #16

This line should be played with the fingers also (except for the last half of bar 2). The 2nd and 3rd fingers play the notes on the G and B strings, and the thumb plays the notes on the D string.

Musical notation for Hotline #16. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb7). The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb7). The notation includes fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 3, 3, 3, 2, 2, 3, 1) and a triplet (11) in the bottom staff.

HOTLINE #17

The 2nd bar of this line should be played with a slight crescendo of feeling (more so than volume).

Eb7

3 3 1 3 1 3 3 1 3 3 1 2 1 1 3 3

(5) (6)

Bb7

(7)

HOTLINE #18

Here again is the use of the minor 3rd and major 6th color. Also, the way the notes jump around in almost random fashion creates a certain tension.

Bb7 F7

4 2 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 1

(8) (9)

HOTLINE #19

The phrasing in this line should be very punchy as in the Texas blues style playing like Albert Collins.

Measures 1-11 of Hotline #19. The notation is in treble and bass staves. Chords Eb7 and Bb7 are indicated. Fingering numbers 1, 3, 2, 3 are shown. A 'B' (bend) is marked on the first measure, and a 'PO' (pull-off) is marked on the last measure. The bass staff shows fret numbers 10 and 11.

Measure 12 of Hotline #19. The notation is in treble and bass staves. Chord F7 is indicated. Fingering numbers 1, 3, 2, 2 are shown. The bass staff shows fret numbers 9 and 10.

This ends the 12 bar Blues section.

HOTLINE #20

The first bar here is virtually a G7add9 arpeggio. Bar two uses a bend on the G string from C to D and then plays the 2nd D on the B string which is a classic blues style of playing.

Measures 1-8 of Hotline #20. The notation is in treble and bass staves. Chords G7 and G7(C7) are indicated. Fingering numbers 2, 2, 1, 1, 3, 1, 3, 1, 3, 1, 3, 3, 1, 3, 1, 3, 3 are shown. A 'B' (bend) is marked on the first measure, and a 'B' (bend) is marked on the last measure. The bass staff shows fret numbers 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

HOTLINE #21

This line could be the opening line for a slow blues, but sounds good at an up tempo shuffle feel as well.

Hotline #21 musical notation. The guitar line (top staff) is in treble clef and contains two measures. The first measure is marked with a C7 chord and the second with an F7 chord. The bass line (bottom staff) is in bass clef and contains two measures. The first measure is marked with a C7 chord and the second with an F7 chord. The bass line includes a 16th note triplet in the second half of the first measure. The tablature (TAB) is written below the bass line staff.

HOTLINE #22

This line sounds best when played as the last two bars of a slow blues progression.

Hotline #22 musical notation. The guitar line (top staff) is in treble clef and contains two measures. The first measure is marked with a C7 chord and the second with an F7 chord. The bass line (bottom staff) is in bass clef and contains two measures. The first measure is marked with a C7 chord and the second with a G7 chord. The bass line includes a 16th note triplet in the second half of the first measure. The tablature (TAB) is written below the bass line staff.

HOTLINE #23

This line could be played in either the 3rd and 4th, or 6th and 7th bars of a blues progression. The 16th note triplet in the 2nd half of bar one sounds different than written, so check the phrasing with the tape.

Hotline #23 musical notation. The guitar line (top staff) is in treble clef and contains two measures. The first measure is marked with a C7 chord and the second with an (F7) chord. The bass line (bottom staff) is in bass clef and contains two measures. The first measure is marked with a C7 chord and the second with a (G7) chord. The bass line includes a 16th note triplet in the second half of the first measure. The tablature (TAB) is written below the bass line staff.

HOTLINE #24

Again, here is the use of minor 3rd and major 6th tension. This line could be considered incomplete in that it shouldn't end on the C quarter note, but keep going. Maybe you could add to this line.

C7 (8VA)

3 3 1 3 3 1 4 1 4 1 1

4 1 3 2 1 4 2 4 2 4 2 1 4 2

TAB: 14 13 11 13 11 13 10 11 13 10 10 13 10 12 11 10 12 11 12 10 12 10 9 12 10

HOTLINE #25

This line works well as an opening 4 bars to a shuffle. The phrasing is tricky here in the first 16th note triplet, and sounds best when played with the fingers.

C7 **F7**

4 1 3 4 3 1 1 3 1 3 1

8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8

TAB: 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8

C7

3 1 3 3 1 3 1 3 1 3

8 5 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8

TAB: 8 5 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8

HOTLINE #26

This could be the opening 4 bars of a 12 bar blues. Watch the 16th note triplet in the 1st bar. This lick sounds best at a shuffle tempo.

8VA

A7 D7

TAB

A7

TAB

HOTLINE #27

This line works well played in the 3rd and 4th bars of a shuffle blues. The notes in the 1st bar basically outline a C major arpeggio and bar 2 starts with the same arpeggio down an octave. That's the stuff that gives your playing form.

C7 (F7)

TAB

HOTLINE #28

This is more of a 'Jazz' line. It begins by using 4th intervals in the 1st bar. The first 4 eighth notes of bar 2 basically spell a D chord (bending the F note allows it to be major or minor, or both).

Dm7 (D7#9)

Hotline #28 is a jazz line in D minor. The guitar line consists of two staves. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second staff is a tablature line with fret numbers. The line is 8 bars long. The first bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: D4, A4, F#4, and D5. The second bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: D4, A4, F4, and D5. The third bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: D4, A4, F#4, and D5. The fourth bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: D4, A4, F4, and D5. The fifth bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: D4, A4, F#4, and D5. The sixth bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: D4, A4, F4, and D5. The seventh bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: D4, A4, F#4, and D5. The eighth bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: D4, A4, F4, and D5.

HOTLINE #29

This line is based on a pattern using the A minor Pentatonic scale. The pattern is established with the first 4 notes after the pick-up, and descends in triadic intervals.

Am7

Hotline #29 is a line based on the A minor Pentatonic scale. The guitar line consists of two staves. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second staff is a tablature line with fret numbers. The line is 8 bars long. The first bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: A4, G4, F4, and E4. The second bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: A4, G4, F4, and E4. The third bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: A4, G4, F4, and E4. The fourth bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: A4, G4, F4, and E4. The fifth bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: A4, G4, F4, and E4. The sixth bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: A4, G4, F4, and E4. The seventh bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: A4, G4, F4, and E4. The eighth bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: A4, G4, F4, and E4.

HOTLINE #30

This line basically just runs the C major scale (G Mixolydian mode) and is good in a static chord situation, or could resolve at the end of the 4 bars to a C7 chord.

G7

Hotline #30 is a line based on the G Mixolydian mode. The guitar line consists of two staves. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second staff is a tablature line with fret numbers. The line is 8 bars long. The first bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, and G5. The second bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, and G5. The third bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, and G5. The fourth bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, and G5. The fifth bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, and G5. The sixth bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, and G5. The seventh bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, and G5. The eighth bar has a half rest followed by four eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, and G5.

HOTLINE #30 (cont.)

Musical notation for Hotline #30 (cont.). The staff shows a sequence of notes with fingerings: 1 4 3 4 | 1 2 4 4 | 2 1 4 4 | 1 2 4. The TAB staff shows fret numbers: 7 10 10 10 | 7 8 10 10 | 8 7 10 10 | 7 9 10.

HOTLINE #31

This line is based on a Diminished scale and is a II V I chord change series. There is a diminished scale 4th pattern set up in the 2nd half of the 1st bar which continues through the 2nd bar.

Musical notation for Hotline #31. The staff shows a sequence of notes with fingerings: 3 1 3 | 4 1 2 1 | 1 3 3 1 | 2 3 4 1 | 1 3 3 1 | 4. The TAB staff shows fret numbers: 10 8 10 | 11 8 9 7 | 7 10 10 8 | 9 11 12 10 | 10 13 13 11 | 15.

HOTLINE #32

This line is based on the same Diminished scale as #31 but in a different key, and is also a II V progression. The diminished scale is almost always resolving to the tonic note or chord. The scale is a series of half steps and whole steps: G Ab Bb Cb Db D E F G = Ab diminished (G7b9) resolving to C.

Musical notation for Hotline #32. The staff shows a sequence of notes with fingerings: 1 4 2 1 | 4 3 4 | 1 2 1 4 | 3 2 1 4 | 2. The TAB staff shows fret numbers: 7 3 6 4 3 | 6 5 6 | 3 4 3 | 6 5 3 2 5 | 3.

HOTLINE #33

This line is based on the use of an Fmaj7 arpeggio against a G7 tonality (once again, the G Mixolydian mode or C scale). A 4 note pattern is set up in the last half of the 3rd bar continuing to the lines end.

G7

HOTLINE #34

This is a standard II V I chord progression. The scale is similar to the diminished scale presented earlier, but this one is half Diminished and half Whole Tone (Ab Melodic minor = G Ab Bb Cb Db Eb F G).

Dm7b5

G7#5

Cmaj7